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"MORDICHIM."

RECOLLECTIONS

OF

CHOLERA IN BARBADOS,

DURING THE MIDDLE OF THE YEAR 1854.

BY

THE REV. THOMAS BUTCHER.

LONDON:
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MORDICHIM.

I.

OUTBREAK.

"Thoughts, that have tarried in my mind, and peopled its inner chambers."

Bethel Chapel is a neat Gothic building. A stranger passing along Bay-street on his way to the garrison, if he had an eye for architecture, would scarcely fail to notice it.

One Sunday afternoon, during the usual routine of school exercises, a little girl in one of the classes was observed to droop and look ill. On being questioned she complained of pain. Her teacher advised her to go out into the air, it might revive her. When the school was *dismissed*, several noticed that she was very sick. Poor child! *The wind had passed over her.* Before medical aid could reach her, she was beyond recovery, and died the next day.

In the neighbourhood of Jemmott's-lane, not far from the Hospital, there were other cases of unaccountable illness occurring about the same time. Three persons, living in a wooden house, were almost simultaneously affected with strange sensations, their whole frame was relaxed, the vital principle apparently exhausted, and their entire aspect was changed as if they had been squeezed by the "cold hand of death."

On the day following this Sabbath, a man of the name of Goodridge, who lived in Lightfoot's-lane, on the other side of the city, was seized, (some said with a fit,) on board one

of the vessels in the harbour, and being carried home he died.

Two children were taken ill in the same house, and soon fell victims; several of the Goodridge family were smitten with the same mysterious malady, and death began to reign in that neighbourhood.

What might all this portend! And the week rolled heavily and anxiously on.

Yet not heavily and anxiously with all, for many made light of what others spoke about in a subdued and fearful tone.

There are moments that command our lives. Points of time on which destinies balance. We review our path, and see them now towering pyramid-like above the dead level of the years. We hear distinctly still, above life's monotone, those startling notes.

Such a period was this—danger was impending—one seemed to pause expectant.

We have seen the lull in nature, when she held her breath, and not a leaf stirred, followed quickly by the sweep of the hurricane, the outburst of the storm. We have heard how Paris was covered with the curtain of night, and its two millions of inhabitants were tranquilly sleeping, when Louis Napoleon was marching into the city 150,000 armed troops, executing his *coup d'état*, changing the French government, and ascending the French throne. One has read of the slopes of Vesuvius, decked up to the very summit of the mountain with smiling towns, fruitful vineyards, gay villas, and flowery parterres; but in a few hours stones and lava were vomited forth in conflagration, burying the magnificent landscape under fiery ashes, and turning a scene of unutterable loveliness into an unvaried sepulchre.

The week of which we have spoken was an unsettled time in Barbados. Medical gentlemen were questioned, but their replies were indecisive. Boards of Health met, but still the oracle was ambiguous. Why should a panic be created? Why should trade and commerce be interrupted

causelessly? And there was a sneer on many lips which by-and-by quivered with different emotions.

The Sabbath returned, the Christian's resurrection-day from worldly toil and care. It was the 21st of May. There was a strange gloom on the face of society, and few, if any, could say as they arose, "This is the day which the Lord hath made: we will *rejoice*, and be *glad* in it." The usual cheerful church-going chimes seemed drowned by the louder knell of death, which now rang out too clearly. Hand-bills, circulated from house to house by the Governor's order, authoritatively proclaimed—the Asiatic Cholera is in Barbados!

The long drought, the consequent scarcity of provisions, the public anxiety recurring every year in the hot season, manifested by the sanitary suggestions of the Board of Health, and the numerous precautionary placards posted in town and country,—the experiences also of adjoining or neighbouring islands, Jamaica, Nevis, St. Thomas's, were premonitions to Barbados; but after all it took us by surprise.

Imperceptibly, noiselessly, it had crept into the island; no drum beat to warn us of the enemy; no telegraph reported it in sight; no harbour-master challenged it; yet the cry arose on every hand,—

"The Plague is begun!"

II.

A SHORT HISTORY OF CHOLERA.

"Mordichim," translated into English, "The bowel-death," is the word used by the Turks and Arabs to designate cholera. "Mordichim" has been corrupted by the French to "mort de chien," which is their name for this dread disease.

Cholera may be considered the successor and modern prototype of plague. The most remarkable plagues that have afflicted the world, of which history gives an account, are three in number. "The Black Death," which taking its

rise in Asia, spread westward into Europe, and raged fearfully for many months. Boccaccio, an Italian writer, gives a vivid description of its ravages in the city of Florence, in the Introduction to his "Decameron"—the plague at Athens, in the year 430 before Christ, recorded by Thucydides—and the Great Plague of London, in 1664-5, of which Daniel Defoe has published the story.

Some have entertained the opinion that a distemper similar to cholera can be traced far back into antiquity. The Brahminical records of remote ages mention a similar disease as having prevailed among the Hindoos. A Batavian doctor describes, under the name of cholera, a disease which was prevalent 200 years ago in the Dutch settlement of Java. Passages, also, from Josephus and other ancient writers, are cited in proof of its antiquity. Ligon, the quaint and amusing historian of Barbados, states that when he reached the island in 1647 there was then raging a disease as bad as the plague, carrying off so many of the inhabitants after very short illnesses, that there were scarcely enough of the living left to bury the dead. "So great," he says, "was the panic, that the bodies of the dead were thrown into the 'Swamp' or 'Constitution' river, thereby poisoning the atmosphere, and aggravating the evil." In Poyet's history of Barbados there is mention also of an epidemic that prevailed in 1692, during which the number of deaths reached twenty per day.

To identify these ancient pestilences with the one that has so recently afflicted the island, would, however, be difficult, perhaps impossible.

The close of the last century is the earliest epoch to which the origin of cholera can be authoritatively traced.

It was in the year 1781 that a body of 5000 troops, stationed at a coast town about 540 miles north-east of Madras, was suddenly attacked by a new disease of such terrible malignity, that men in perfect health dropped down dead by dozens. They were smitten as with instantaneous death. Exclusive of these more than 500 men sickened in

one day, and the most part sank hopelessly within an hour; next day the distemper still raged with unabated fury, and on the third day more than half the army had either perished or were in the hospital.

The next appearance of this strange malady was at Hurdwar, likewise in the Indian peninsula, where it broke out in the year 1783 among the pilgrims, and swept into eternity no less than 20,000 of the worshippers of that celebrated shrine.

In 1817, "the bowel death" burst forth in Bengal with extraordinary malignity, and now it was no longer localized, but migratory. Taking a westward course, within a few weeks it had devastated every town and village within an area of several thousand square miles, from Sylbet in the east to Cuttack in the west, and from the mouth of the Ganges upwards to its confluence with the Jumna.

From this central district the pestilence travelled by three principal streams, one flowing south-west along the Coromandel coast,—another south-east along the opposite coast of the Bay of Bengal to Arracan, and the Malay peninsula,—a third westward along the valley of the Ganges to Bundelcund, where the grand army, consisting of 10,000 fighting men and 80,000 camp-followers, was assembled under the Marquis of Hastings. In twelve months, the south-western stream had reached Madras, in six months more it had crossed the north coast of the island of Ceylon; in November, 1819, it had reached the Mauritius. The south-eastern stream travelled more slowly. It took twelve months to reach Arracan, twelve more to descend along the Malay peninsula. At Penang, an island on that coast, where there is a British settlement, it destroyed three-fourths of the population. Sumatra, Java, the Spice Islands, and Timor, were successively visited; and while thus spreading to the extreme south-east limit, checked only by the ocean, at the same time it crept northward, reaching the Philippine Islands, where it decimated the barbarian tribes, who, driven to desperation by a mortality so shrouded in mystery, rose

against the Chinese and Europeans, accused them of magic, and massacred many thousands. At a Dutch settlement, on the western coast of Borneo, it carried off the whole garrison, except one man. Still running northward, in 1820 it reached Canton, and Pekin in 1821. For several years it devastated China, then passed the Great Wall, and in 1827 was raging in Mongolia among the Tartar tribes.

Some have laid it down as the basis of a theory of choleraic propagation, that the disease only travels westward. The facts here detailed (carefully condensed from the "Times," and other sources of authority,) scatter such a theory to the winds.

We have yet to follow the western stream, which, travelling about four hundred miles in three months, against the periodical monsoon, infecting some, but sparing others, of the towns and villages in its track, reached early in November the British army, encamped on low ground on the banks of the Scinde. The camp was turned into an hospital. Nine thousand men perished in a week. The sentinel was often seized at his post; his successor would be smitten too. A third and a fourth man would sometimes succumb before the two hours' duty was performed. Many fell down in convulsions while carrying their comrades to the hospital. The neighbouring ravines were filled with the dead!

We have seen how in eighteen months it had overrun India and the East; let us now watch it in its course towards Europe.

In July, 1821, the cholera broke out with tremendous violence at the three principal ports of the Persian Gulf. In Muscat alone ten thousand persons perished. At Bushire the houses were abandoned, the bazaars closed, and the streets strewn with unburied corpses. At Bussorah eighteen thousand persons died in eleven days.

It slept during the winter of this year (1821). In the summer of 1822 it awoke again, and resumed its march, threatening Europe. In 1823, it moved slowly from Aleppo. Six years rolled over. During this period the pestilence

hovered strangely on the eastern skirts of Europe. Yet no quarantine was enforced, no obstacle opposed to the streams of human intercourse flowing westward from the infected places! Was the plague exhausted? The alarm excited by its proximity had evidently passed away. In the summer of 1829 it again gave signs of its existence in unabated malignity on the boundary of Europe. Next year, during the heats of July, the smouldering pestilence broke out again in Persia. Then it ascended the Volga, and reached Moscow, in the centre of Russia, in September, 1830. On the 14th of September, two or three cases were reported. The Emperor of Russia became alarmed. He threw a cordon sanitaire round Moscow, established a strict quarantine at its gates, and enjoined a careful isolation of the sick. But the subtle and mysterious element penetrated all these circumvallatory defences, and spreading rapidly, and chiefly attacking the squalid inhabitants, in six weeks it had carried off above three thousand persons.

Taking the course of the great rivers—the Don and the Volga—the disease rapidly extended. From Moscow it passed to St. Petersburg, and reached the shores of the Baltic. It was spreading at the same time along the banks of the river Don, and menacing the shores of the Black Sea. It appeared at Odessa, and at the mouths of the Danube, soon after its outbreak in Moscow.

Then the cholera made its way across the Continent by several parallel streams. It reached Vienna in 1831. Travelling from Petersburg by Riga and Stettin, it appeared about the same time at Berlin. Many towns of Poland were ravaged in the same year. Then the infection was carried along the roads and rivers through Austria, Hungary, and Germany, and it reached Hamburgh in the autumn of the year 1831.

Reverting for a moment to the east, we find it was in Egypt in the same year. At Mecca, twenty thousand of the pilgrims perished in four days, and at Cairo the mortality was so terrible that even the physicians perished, and the

hospitals were filled with shrieking wretches dying without aid. Constantinople had two months previously been entered by a pestilential stream.

It was early in October that Hamburgh was attacked. On the 26th of the same month the disease broke out at Sunderland. At that time, although it seemed of almost universal presence, France was still unaffected; the Spanish and Italian peninsulas were also healthy, and continued so till 1835.

Almost simultaneously with its appearance at Sunderland, the disease broke out in London. Four months later it was in Edinburgh, and a few months after in Dublin. Spreading gradually through Great Britain and Ireland, it destroyed in its homicidal course about 50,000 persons. Calais and Paris were infected in March, 1832, obviously by a reverted stream from England.

The ninth day of June, 1832, will ever be remembered (says an American writer) as the period when this scourge appeared on the continent of America. Quebec was the first place. In the same month it broke out in New York, and spreading rapidly, ravaged nearly the whole continent.

While the western stream of virus was thus completing the circuit of the globe, a reflux current travelling more slowly from England, in a south-easterly direction, attacked Lisbon and Madrid in 1833, spread during 1834 throughout the peninsula, infecting the British garrison at Gibraltar; penetrated in 1835 to Piedmont, Genoa, and Florence, (which the Alps it would seem had previously protected,) reached Naples in 1836, and Rome in 1837.

The rigorous quarantine at Naples proved utterly ineffectual.

From this sketch, it will be seen that the cholera of 1817, in its course to England, had three periods of active progress, separated by two pauses. Two years it took to overrun India; two to pass through Persia to the Caspian Sea; and two to spread through Central Europe to Great Britain.

During two years it paused in its career, on the western boundary of Hindostan; during six it smouldered on the eastern verge of Europe. The two southern peninsulas, isolated in a great measure by the Alps and the Pyrenees, enjoyed a further special respite, nor was it until twenty years after its outbreak in Bengal, that this terrible plague had encompassed the habitable globe.

From 1817 to 1831, it is estimated that the cholera carried off eighteen millions of the inhabitants of Hindostan.

In its westward progress the disease was observed to have added to its former terrors a new and most destructive feature, *the consecutive fever*, of which thousands perished after surviving the stage of collapse.

In 1847, it swept again over the continent of Europe, pouncing on England, and raging in several of the principal towns. It pursued with but little variation the same track, only travelling more rapidly, and committing fiercer ravages than before.

The lovely islands of the West Indies, kissed by the waves of the Caribbean and Atlantic Seas, and fanned by the north-east trade winds, had hitherto enjoyed an immunity; the eccentric plague had passed over them: but during its last visit westward they were marked to feel the effects of its violence; and it has since fallen on Jamaica repeatedly, and other islands severely. The recent ravages of cholera in Barbados have given rise to the present attempt to perpetuate a profitable remembrance of the awful visitation.

It has been remarked, that everywhere the squalid abodes of the poor, and their miserable inmates, are the chief seats and subjects of the disease. It cannot be controverted that cholera has an "elective affinity" for filth, and that the pestilence will seek out the most unwholesome places in which to revel. Yet all experience proves that these, though congenial to cholera, nurseries where it gathers

strength, and finds a home, are not its birthplaces; it is not indigenous to them. They do but draw it down, as the conductor draws down the lightning.

We have traced its course, we have been eye-witnesses, students of its terrible energy and effects, but cholera itself is still incognito. Its mystery remains unravelled, the poison cup it holds is peculiarly its own; the essence of Asiatic cholera is so subtle as to continue undetected, even amidst the accumulated science of the nineteenth century.

III.

BRIDGETOWN,

When viewed from the harbour, or from the heights above the city, presents a picturesque appearance. The numerous churches, the detached mansions embowered in trees, the lofty cabbage-palm here and there waving its graceful plumes, the white stucco-covered houses, the fine stone pier or breakwater, and the fort standing on one point of the curved shore, defended seaward by a succession of low rocky heights, and spreading inland over an extensive plain, form altogether a coup d'œil refreshing and agreeable to the spectator. On landing, as is also the case with Eastern cities, much of this illusion is dispelled. The town is not laid out with many pretensions to regularity, having rather extended according to the means and tastes of its inhabitants.

"Constitution" river divides the city, forming where it disembogues into Carlisle Bay a careenage, in which vessels of light draught can lie, and receive cargoes from the wharves and stores which line either bank. The population is dense, being estimated at between thirty-five and forty thousand persons. The streets are mostly narrow. The "Roebuck" is an exception, being a long, spacious, airy outlet from the city into the interior of the island. Broad-street, the principal thoroughfare for business, is not suffi-

ciently wide for the stream of daily traffic that pours along it. The situation of Bridgetown is low, damp, and ill-ventilated, and as this metropolis has spread, several villages have unhappily retained their position in its lap. The meandering lanes and alleys of these villages are close and impure, and the dwellings for the most part small, crowded, and unwholesome. As they are built of wood, when one of these dwellings takes fire, the whole city is in a panic, both property and life being placed in extreme peril. The drawing-room floors of many of the best houses have a green verandah and jalousies, which when closed give the balconies an eastern aspect; but the general style of the town, especially about Trafalgar-square, looking along High-street, is more or less Italian. The bronze statue of Nelson, on a granite pedestal in the centre of the square, gives a finish to this exchange of Barbados, and speaks affinity between the colony and Britain.

Having thus premised we proceed to glance at the spread and ravages of cholera in Bridgetown. From May 14th to the end of that month, the disease, capricious in its manifestations, insidious in its progress, but more and more fatal and violent in its attacks, had broken out in different parts of the city. From Jemmott's-lane it was moving up towards Collymore rock, victims falling daily in its homicidal course. Attracted by the swamp called "Ribbett's-pond," it flapped its deadly wings over that locality, and along Nelson Street the "animated miasm" (as a German doctor defines cholera) found its way. About the same time persons were dying in Lightfoot's-lane; by the 26th of May, six of the Goodridge family had been cut down. Entering their house, from which one coffin had just been borne, on the morning of the 28rd instant, I saw a young woman lying very ill in the chamber; on the other side of the partition, two children were dying on the knees of charitable neighbours, and the corpse of an adult was stretched out on the couch.

The disease was now spreading in one direction through

Chapman's and King's villages, in another to Mason Hall-street and Cheapside, and by this time infecting green fields in its course it had broken out in the opposite quarter of the city, amidst the dense population of Church village, where it wound along the devious mazes of court and alley in that human labyrinth, as poison might travel along the veins and arteries of the human frame.

It is a melancholy task to recall a time like that of which I am the chronicler; but taking the 2nd of June for a stand point, I surround myself again with its realities and retrospects.

The one absorbing topic now in Bridgetown was the cholera. As an able minister eloquently and justly remarks in a sermon on the subject (since published): "The ominous word (cholera) was on every lip. . . . . Intense excitement agitated every heart; the wheels of business made an awful pause, and the land was wrapped in solemn gloom. When the mind thought, it thought of cholera; when the tongue spake, it spake of cholera; when the hand wrote, it wrote of cholera."

The Board of Health had emphatically declared the disease to be Asiatic cholera in its most malignant form. The mortality increased daily. The graveyard connected with the new chapel at St. Leonard's being large, and on the outskirts of the city, was at first devoted to cholera burials. They had risen at the beginning of June to forty per diem. From the nature of the ground, and the difficulty of getting labourers, in consequence of the increasing panic, the graves were not dug of a sufficient depth. The dead were entombed scarcely two feet beneath the surface ; the swelling soil was ready to burst at every point with its festering contents, and the long dry weather cracking the earth, a putrid smell came up, and overspread the neighbourhood. The dogs, too, turned resurrectionists, and horrible rumours floated about the city.

Leaving the memory of the inhabitants and the imagination of strangers to fill up the awful interval, I pass on a week,

and view Bridgetown on the 9th instant. Our view is now a prospective one. In ten days from the above date, about 2000 persons sank in death. The pestilence reigned, conquering every interest; it raged, spreading like devouring fire.

At this period, it was impossible any longer to hold service at St. Leonard's Chapel, as the noisome smell polluted the air. The graveyard was also closed, and all who were able to get other houses withdrew from the vicinity. Interments now took place at Indian River. Just where it falls (or would fall if there was more water,) into the sea between Brandons and Fontabelle, four acres of land were purchased by the commissioners. The name of this new burial-ground is Peaza's. Peaza's! It comes curdling even now to my memory, for I have seen the dying in greater dread of being carried there, than they appeared to be of eternity and judgment. The mortality increased daily. On the 6th, 209 fresh cases were reported. A week after, at Indian River, there were 244 interments in one day.

And now the disease struck the public institutions. Soon after its outbreak, the prisoners in the gaol were asked by His Excellency the Governor, if they would assist in digging the graves at St. Leonard's. With that willingness for any hardship, however severe, any enterprise, however perilous, if it relieves them from the painful monotony of prison life, which it has been observed characterizes convicts generally, the whole of them at once offered for the duty. Out of the number, twenty-five were selected. On the third or fourth day after being thus employed, the disease broke out in the gaol. Between seventy and eighty prisoners were then in durance, the Governor at an early stage of the pestilence had humanely liberated all but those convicted of grave offences. In a malignant form the pestilence attacked the unhappy criminals confined within the prison walls. One, and another, and another sank, till sixty-seven had fallen victims, including twenty-three out of the twenty-five who had dug graves at St. Leonard's. The cholera struck off

chains, and unbarred doors, and freed captives, literally effecting a gaol delivery. On the 19th of June, the "keepers of the prison" kept watch and ward over empty cells. The gaoler and turnkeys were left alone. At the Lunatic Asylum there were sixteen deaths. The unfortunate patients, it is said, refused medicine. The Asylum for the Destitute, near the reef, was also visited, and none survived the pestilential breath. Mr. and Mrs. Kennedy, who had the care of the institution, were numbered with the dead. The terrible malady greatly reduced the strength of the police force, many had leave of absence to attend their dying relatives, some were worn out with extra duty, and others died. One or two were carried almost daily from the central station, James-street, to the house appointed for all living. When the disease appeared in the barracks, at St. Ann's, the military authorities at once encamped the troops. Most of them were put under canvass at Gun-hill, in St. George's parish, at Britton's-hill, at Naval Hospital, and the remainder, chiefly military labourers, pitched their tents on the St. Ann's Savannah. Notwithstanding these precautions there was a considerable mortality. The numerical strength of the garrison before the cholera broke out was 1600 men. It was made up from the 36th, 46th, and 67th regiments, and the 1st West India regiment. From the 13th to the 18th of June, about fifteen soldiers died per diem. The deaths at the military hospital up to the 20th of June were 140: up to July 11th, 262 soldiers had fallen.

The conduct of the African military labourers during the epidemic furnished a melancholy instance of the effects of heathenism. When attacked by the disease, they refused every remedy, being "quite content," they said, "to die, then they could return to their own country."

Several seamen died on board the vessels in the harbour, and some on shore. I was with the captain of the "Dapper" in his last moments. Towards the middle of June, the disease still raging frightfully among the poor, selected occasional victims from the higher walks of life. It entered

Government House, and cut down one of the servants of Miss Colebrooke, and the orderly of His Excellency.

One who carefully acquired the information, estimates the interments at St. Leonard's, Indian River, and the garrison, up to the 19th of June, at 3585. To these are to be added about eighty more buried at the Cathedral, Bethel, and St. Mary's, in lead and otherwise.

It will be impossible ever to arrive at the number of deaths, as in many instances, the coffin containing the parent received also one, two, and sometimes three, children.

Let us take a turn up Broad-street. Where are the carriages, carts, men, and women, that so recently filled it up with "bustle, noise, and show?" How changed this mart of business! How empty those stores! How stagnant everything except the trade in death! Look along that wharf, so lately resonant with the busy hum of trade and commerce. How quiet now!

Wednesday the 14th of June was observed as a day of humiliation and prayer. It was a season of peculiar solemnity. The disease had reached its height. Between two and three hundred were dying daily in the city. On the Saturday following, the streets, usually so crowded on that day, were almost deserted, and a strange tomb-like stillness reigned in them. As I rode along High-street, through the square and Bay-street to Bethel, the wail of Jeremiah was perpetually recurring to my mind: "How doth the city sit solitary that was full of people."

Few ventured into the city from the country; no one residing at a distance, that could postpone his business, or waive his official duties, would come into Bridgetown, for rumour exaggerated the evil so dreadful in reality. Many fled in terror from the city and hired houses in the country; but, in the case of some, the cholera had swifter wing, their coffin followed them to the place of fancied security, and the hearse brought back the corpse of him whom the carriage had but a little while before borne living and hopeful from

the plague-stricken city. The stores remained closed until half-past eight A. M. Brandy and blankets were almost the only articles for which there was any demand. The shops most frequented were those dealing in food and medicine. But though the streets about this time were little used for traffic, or trod by passengers, there were sounds coming from them day and night,—sounds that penetrated every dwelling, and caused hearts to beat faster. There was the hollow, unmistakeable rumbling of the dead carts, carrying empty coffins along the streets, and returning with them filled—five or six coffins in a load—to the place of interment. And there was another sound, that ever and anon fell painfully on the ear of anxious listeners—it was the cry of bereavement as the souls of friends departed. And there was yet another sound that scarcely intermitted:

"Rat—tat-tat, rat—tat-tat, rat—tat-tat," issuing from cabinet-makers' shops, and private dwellings. It was the busy coffin-makers plying the trade to which relentless death was giving such terrible energy. Many made coffins then who were unaccustomed to the use of joiners' tools, fearful lest their kindred otherwise should be cast coffinless into the cholera pit, for the number of coffins required now was too great for the contractor to supply.

An old woman that I visited in Church village, I found, on my return, had lain dead two days, in the chamber which was occupied by her corpse, and her living but bed-ridden daughter; and, when I hastened to the contractor's to procure a coffin for her, taking with me a man to carry it, the order was received, but I observed that it was No. 82 upon the list. Wherever the eye turned it fell on coffins, and there were houses, too, becoming empty and localities depopulated.

Some dreamed awful dreams, and relating them, added to the universal consternation. One girl affirmed that she had seen a vision, in which she had been informed what to do, if attacked by cholera, and that the Son of God had commis-

sioned her to proclaim that in nine days Barbados would be destroyed.

As she sent a messenger round with the awful announcement, many received it as prophecy, and terror seized upon the weak-minded. Crowds flocked to the chapels, kneeling even round the walls, and filling the yards, and fervently imploring the Divine mercy.

Looking into Defoe's account of London during the Great Plague in 1664, I see, as in a mirror, many of the features of Bridgetown during this reign of cholera. He says, "The gaming-tables, public dancing-rooms, and music-houses, which multiplied and began to debauch the manners of the people, were shut up and suppressed . . . . . finding indeed no trade, for the minds of the people were agitated with other things, and a kind of sadness and horror at these things sat upon the countenances even of the common people; death was before their eyes, and everybody began to think of his grave, not of mirth and diversions."

Let us stand a little while in Baxter's-road and watch the funerals as they move along, almost in procession. There goes the hearse, with its nodding plumes, carrying its load of coffins,—then the phaeton pressed into unaccustomed service, the two ends of the coffin projecting from each side,—then the dead-cart, loaded with mortality,—then the truck, with a single coffin, then an interval, and another succession of coffins, some large, some small, some coffins with more than one corpse in—and some corpses without a coffin.

"The fashion of this world" how it "passeth away!" The blighting wind of the Divine displeasure was sweeping destructively over us. One Sabbath afternoon, when the disease was raging fearfully, a Wesleyan minister took his stand in the "Burnt district," and founding his exhortations on Isaiah xl. 6, 7, preached to a congregation of several hundred persons. The time, the terror, the evidence of the afflictive epidemic being the visitation of God, combined to make the theme solemn and suitable. "The voice said,

Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field: The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass."

To some who shortly after slept in death, God made the above words spirit and life.

I insert here statistics of the daily interments at "Indian River," (the new burial-ground,) from June 6th to the 19th:—

June	6th . .	133	June	13th . .	244
„	7th . .	199	Fast-day	14th . .	270
„	8th . .	132	„	15th . .	311
„	9th . .	210	„	16th . .	236
„	10th . .	226	„	17th . .	232
„	11th . .	236	„	18th . .	223
„	12th . .	198	„	19th . .	180

This table of mortality shows that the pyramid of cholera victims reached its apex on or about the Fast-day, and gradually diminished from the time of public humiliation and prayer.

I linger still in these "recollections" about the period of the Fast-day, for it was an eventful time in the annals of Bridgetown. The 13th, 14th, 15th, 16th, and few following days—what days of gloom and perplexity they were! Every one shrank from the breath of cholera! Death reigned!

The type of the disease at this stage was extremely malignant. Persons were seized suddenly at their business, and in the streets, and, after a few hours' stupor, attended with cramps in the arms and legs, sometimes with vertigo, they died often without any signs of pain.

The deaths among washerwomen and cooks were more numerous comparatively than those among any other classes of people. The extraordinary mortality of the washerwomen is attributed by some to infection from the clothes, by others to their constant exposure to damp, the clothes being washed some distance from the city; and, again, to their unwhole-

some food, and irregular hours of eating, it being customary with them to fast frequently from early morning to nightfall. The numerous deaths among the cooks may be owing to the extremes of heat and cold through which their business requires them to pass. One, whose name delicacy restrains me from mentioning, but who was second to none for sustained effort, skill, intrepidity, and success, in the use of homœopathic remedies during the epidemic, has furnished me with the following statistics:—"While the disease prevailed as an epidemic the number of deaths was equally divided, as to men, women, and children; but when it became of a sporadic form, very young children died, in the proportion of three to one. At the beginning of the epidemic, old people, principally women, died in the proportion of two to one; subsequently, people of ages from twenty to thirty-five years died in larger proportions."

Let us take another look on Bridgetown during the height of the disease. The scene is chequered only by accumulated misery, varied by the increase of bereavement and distress. The cholera ran like a tide of fire. On account of the difficulty in getting coffins, there was a consequent delay in burying the dead. There were instances of some that lay days without burial, and the air became tainted around them. One body was found in a shut-up house (by "Ribbett's-pond") into which it was supposed the man had crawled when the pains of death were on him. The putrid smell, and the howling of the dogs, discovered his remains to the neighbours, who, breaking into the house, were struck with horror at the sight which met their gaze. A large shell was quickly knocked together, and two men, by the offer of a fee, were induced with hoes to shovel the partly decomposed corpse into it, and placing the loathsome burden in a cart, it was carried off for burial.

The dead carts rumble along the streets. Let us follow them. We travel in company. Phaetons, hearses, carts, trucks, wheelbarrows. Way, there, for the dead! Sadly we move along Baxter's-road, and men and women at the

house-doors watch us as we pass. We wonder how many are saying—

"Am I
Prepared, should I be called to die?"

We try to read their faces, and see fatigue legible on many, and most of their countenances exhibiting anxiety and gloom; but some laugh desperately, and exchange coarse jokes with those who drive the dead carts. Many have evidently succeeded in expelling "dull care" by drinking ardent spirits, and their ribaldry startles one at times, as if hell's gates were opened, and fiends had come amongst us. We are winding now down Westbury-road. The atmosphere is putrid, and the smell of death horrible. Several persons in the company are smoking cigars. You must keep a firm heart, for the air is laden with infection. See! we have reached the place! Now look around. The rippling wave breaks with a musical chime on the beach close by, and the fields and trees have put on their gayest dress, for rain has fallen, and the fertile land is refreshed; but what Gehenna do we behold? What field of death is this that meets our eye?—the abomination of desolation, a desert patch in an oasis, a blank, a blot upon creation! This is Peaza's! The horror of the living; the dread of the dying. "Name of God, go in," said the impatient sexton to the inquisitive Defoe, the historian of the Great Plague in London; "Name of God, go in, for, depend upon it, it will be a sermon to you; it may be the best that ever you heard in your life. It is a speaking sight," said he, "and has a voice with it, and a loud one, to call us all to repentance—and with that he opened the door." In the churchyard to which Defoe was anxious to be admitted, and which he was permitted to enter after the above colloquy, a great gulf had been dug, that entombed in two weeks one thousand one hundred and fourteen bodies, swept by the plague from the immediate neighbourhood.

We survey Peaza's more particularly. The green sward has been peeled off, and the piece of land dug up in mounds

and pits. Fires are burning, fed with the staves of tar-barrels. Trenches supersede graves. Coffins lie all about. I counted sixty — for they cannot inter them as fast as they are brought on the ground—although many men are digging, and they lay them in one on another till they almost reach the surface. Some of the corpses have burst in the coffins, and putridity exudes in a black, fœtid stream upon the soil, and some coffins are broken, having been hastily put together, or roughly handled afterwards; and the feet, hands, and other parts of the dead expose their ghastly forms to the eye of day.

Let us go. We turn away and retrace our steps to the city. We meet them still hurrying down—phaetons, hearses, carts, trucks—making haste to bury the dead out of their sight.

No psalm, no prayer, no sermon; funeral services are abandoned now to the sexton and grave-diggers; the ministers of religion have turned from the dead they cannot benefit, to the living whom they may be able to save.

The estimate of deaths in St. Michael's parish, for reasons which I have given,* will ever be conjectural; the interments at St. Leonard's, Peaza's, Bethel, &c., comprising burials for Bridgetown and suburbs, are about six thousand eight hundred.

IV.

EFFORTS TO ALLAY PUBLIC APPREHENSION AND TO CHECK THE DISEASE, AND FURTHER DETAILS OF MORTALITY.

> "For there are deeds that must not pass away,
> And names that should not wither."

Whatever may have been the sanitary state of Bridgetown prior to the outbreak of cholera, from the period of its detection, and the announcement of its malignant character,

* The numerous private interments, and two or three corpses being frequently put into one coffin.

both public officers and private individuals exerted themselves unremittingly to check the pestilence, and dispel the fears of the people. The sum of £600 sterling was placed by the legislature at the disposal of the Commissioners of Health to meet their present exigencies. The further sum of £500 was laid out in the purchase of a new burial-ground. A private subscription was also set on foot, to which the officers of the garrison, and the merchants and other citizens, liberally contributed, and a thousand dollars were soon raised. A committee was appointed for the disbursement of the fund in the purchase of homœopathic medicines, and the payment of agents to administer them.

A number of gentlemen offered their gratuitous services to the Board of Health, and a careful and active visitation from house to house was commenced. Clean bills of health were now discontinued, and the governments of the other islands were apprized of our state.

His Excellency Sir William Colebrooke, with the greatest promptitude, divided the city into seven districts, and appointed two medical officers to each division. In these districts soup kitchens were opened, and the destitute, procuring a certificate from a Commissioner, might receive daily rations, including bread, soup, tous-les-mois, candles, soap, and other necessaries of life. Lime was also served out gratuitously by the authorities, and many availing themselves of the benefit washed their houses and yards. Several thousand gallons of water were distributed daily, and the advantage was in general thankfully received, and duly prized: it is however stated, to the disgrace of those concerned, that some were so indifferent to the boon as to require the water carrier, not merely to bring it to their doors, but to carry it also into their houses.

His Excellency, the members of the Board of Health, the Health Commissioners, the ministers of religion, magistrates, and gentlemen of science and philanthropy, devoted themselves with untiring zeal and courage to relieve the sufferings of those attacked, and to remove the panic with

which others were stricken. The unwearied efforts of the medical gentlemen are above all praise. With little intermission they were constantly passing about the infected localities, prescribing the means of relief, and directing the efforts of more impulsive but less practised *médecins*. The removal successively of Drs. Bascom and Brereton, whose lives fell a sacrifice to the all-conquering epidemic, is an irreparable loss to the island. The death of Dr. Springer, also of St. Lucy's parish, whose wife's coffin was borne from his door for burial just as he was sinking into the stupor and unconsciousness which in cholera is the token of death, is another melancholy and affecting incident in these cholera recollections. It will not be deemed irrelevant if I introduce here an example of the incessant demands on the time, skill, and powers of endurance of doctors of medicine at such a crisis. I copy it from a letter published in the " West Indian " newspaper. " On the 24th of June, Dr. Walton (who although ill, had not flinched in his exertions, going from place to place, and from one estate to another, visiting the sick) was suddenly summoned, about four o'clock in the afternoon, to attend a girl with a compound fracture of the thigh. She had been injured in a marl-pit by the falling of a large stone. The gig in which the doctor was driving to her relief got completely run into, smashed, and turned over, by the carelessness of a carter from Frazer's estate. As the result of this accident the doctor received a dislocation of his left arm, got his mouth and tongue awfully cut, and lost some of his teeth. Fortunately another indefatigable medical gentleman, Dr. Manning, soon got to his assistance, and replaced the arm, very quickly set the fractured limb of the wounded girl, attended some five or six cholera patients, and left our neighbourhood to do a great deal more good ere he rested that night.

If Barbados had a " Pantheon," and was as much given to hero-worship as Germany and France, one niche or pedestal in that temple of fame should be reserved for an individual of

the name of Perkins. Memory scarcely rests on one who during this period of unexampled perplexity and death earned a better title to national immortality. He was the contractor for coffins. Unmoved by the prevailing panic, he went fearlessly among the dying and the dead, not only furnishing the coffins but promptly removing the corpses, sometimes breaking open doors to get at them, and lifting them often (when relatives were paralyzed with fear, or had deserted them) into the coffins with his own hands. By the inscrutable appointment of the All-wise God, who keeps reward as well as punishment for a future day, affliction overtook this heroic man in his own family. When he was himself almost worn out with toil, his wife fell a victim to the raging pestilence. The personal sacrifices he had made for the public weal gave intensity to the pang of his bereavement, and it was impossible to witness without emotion his unutterable grief.

Names like these ought not to wither. The whole range of history does not furnish a greater instance of true heroism, than that of the philanthropist who fearlessly braves danger in the hope of being useful to his fellow-creatures, who flies to the relief of those, to touch whose hand or inhale whose breath can only be characterized as a more generous species of suicide. Compared with such men kings and conquerors sink into insignificance. The deeds of the latter are soon blotted from the page of human memory, but the triumphs of those who have sacrificed anything for the public good shall ride on the wings of undying fame.

"In the heraldry of heaven, goodness precedes greatness."

Although the people generally attended their relatives in sickness, and I have known a female to nurse her dying husband and children day and night till in succession they had all been carried to the grave and she was left alone exhausted and desolate, there were unhappily, especially at the outbreak of cholera, painful instances of callousness, desertion, and neglect.

One man who had seen his wife and mother die, ran away from the house leaving four small children with the corpses, being under the impression that the disease was more infectious after death than before.

Another man employed in one of the country parishes to bury the dead, is said to have made upon his death-bed a startling confession. With others he was accustomed to receive one shilling and sixpence for the interment of each corpse, and so demoralized were some of these men that they would contend for the propriety of the bodies. "This," one would say, "is my corpse." "No," another would defiantly reply, "I will have it, it belongs to me." On one occasion, when the man referred to was about to lower a coffin into the grave, he heard a noise inside, and knew that the tenant must be alive. He related how he then rested the coffin on the side of the grave, and reasoned with himself, addressing also his supposed auditor within the coffin: "If I open the coffin," said he, "it is night, and I cannot get any assistance for you, so that you will only live a short time, and I shall lose my shilling and a half." Cupidity at length prevailed, and, according to his dying confession, he buried alive the unfortunate victim of cholera and mammon!

As an aide-de-camp of the general was riding one morning, during the reign of the pestilence, along Bay-street, he saw a girl lying in the road, in the last stage of cholera, whom her connexions had turned out of doors as soon as she was attacked. The British officer with proper humanity had her removed to a place of shelter, where she shortly after expired.

These cases were, however, the exceptions, not the rule. "In my attendance lately on the sick," writes a gentleman, who went about during the epidemic, "doing good," "I have generally witnessed much tender affection in the members of families to each other." Some there were who perished in the work of mercy to the sick, and many a deed proving the dignity and beauty of man's original was quietly done in these days of trial.

When persons were drawing near to death, their attendants would secure a coffin from the contractor, as the cart was passing which contained them. In some instances the individuals considered in a hopeless state would strangely recover, and the coffin intended for them would receive the corpse of their relative or nurse.

One woman had lost several of her relatives, and at the time I now refer to she was attending her dying daughter. Believing that she had breathed her last, she asked for a coffin. When the man carried it in, as he saw she was alone in the house, he promised that on returning with his load of dead, he would assist her to put her daughter in the coffin. During his absence, as the mother stood looking sadly on her child, she fancied she saw a movement, first in one hand, then in the other, and going close to her with a light, she discovered that her eyes were open. Uttering a scream, the poor woman immediately applied stimulants, and gradually she had the happiness of seeing her daughter recover.

The girl rehearses now the agony she endured, when unable either to speak or move, but perfectly conscious, she heard her mother and the undertaker speak about putting her in the coffin, and was sensible that it was laid close to her on the bed.

"Familiarity with dangers," it has been said, "disarms them of half their terrors." So it was in the time of cholera. As death became more familiar, the people grew more insensible of its solemnities.

"The first word," said a lady, "that reached my ears on opening my window in the morning, was the shrill voice of a woman hailing some one at a distance, 'Heigh! bring back your cart, there 's DEAD here!'"

In some cases, every relative being dead or gone, the baby child was left the solitary occupant of the house. A young woman was passing along the street with an infant in her arms, when she was accosted from a balcony by a lady who knew her with, "How is this? I did not know that you had

a child." "No, ma'am," was the reply, "but I saw this one sitting on the floor in an empty house, and with the help of Master (God) I must care it."

Sometimes both parents died, and their children and property were alike at the mercy of the world.

"Your mother is dead of cholera," said a man (who had sacrificed the notice of respectable relatives through a *mésalliance*) to his children, and I have got the disease, and shall die also; what, my children, will become of you? Perhaps, (a ray of hope illuminating his dark horizon,) perhaps your grandmother will do something for you."

There were prudent, careful individuals who threw a *cordon sanitaire* around their dwelling, washing all their clothes at home, airing every article before it was admitted into the house, receiving no visitors, using anxiously and wisely every precaution; but after all the disease insinuated itself, and snatched the beloved wife from her husband's side.

Fatigue and grief are alleged by medical authorities to be strongly predisposing to the infection. Facts seem to sustain this theory, as in many instances husbands and wives followed each other to the grave after a very short interval. I knew a couple who had only been married a month, and were residing with an aunt. Their relative was first attacked. About the time when her coffin was leaving the house, the wife was smitten with the disease; in a few hours after the broken-hearted man came to tell me she was dead. I tried to console and encourage him, for his emaciated face and sunken eyes caused me to fear the worst. I afterwards learned that on reaching home he had thrown himself on his wife's coffin, been removed to the bed, there attacked with the disease in a malignant form, and in a few hours he departed this life to rejoin his partner on the shores of an eternal state. Affliction, which ordinarily awakens sympathy, and gives utterance to the voice, and activity to the hand of friendship, which brings friends more closely together and reconciles enemies,

had in this epidemic an isolating effect. The claims of hospitality had to yield to those of self-preservation, for cases occurred in which a person calling to see a friend, was attacked as he sat conversing, and the house was turned into a hospital. Such an instance came under my own observation; the proprietor of the house had at once to remove his family, for his friend who had stepped in to spend the evening was suddenly seized, while engaged in conversation, with the awful malady. Everything was done for the afflicted man that it was possible for skill and care to effect, but he sank beyond recovery in a very short time. The wife of his unfortunate host, who had witnessed his sudden seizure, and whose health was extremely delicate, never rallied again from the shock she received. At the house to which they were obliged to remove, she was attacked with cholera; the disease made rapid progress,—*the blossom withered on its fragile stem;* and in a day or two the mother and her unborn babe dropped together into an untimely grave. Thus melancholy were the consequences of a friendly visit: a family were turned out of their home, and a husband was bereaved of his partner and child, and a circle of relatives bound up and blessed in each other were severed and plunged in deepest affliction.

"The light had faded away, and the shadow fell softly in its place."

A very rapid case of cholera occurred in the parish of Saint James. A man who was well at two o'clock in the afternoon, was dead before nine o'clock in the evening. At three P.M. he stopped at the Hole-town Dispensary to get a dose of medicine, as he was going some distance to attend to the cultivation of his land, but becoming worse he returned home and went to bed about four o'clock. Active remedies were promptly administered, and a doctor was with him almost immediately, but he sank gradually into the arms of death.

It would be easy to multiply examples of cholera mortality, but those I have already adduced either came under my own eye, or I am able personally to vouch for their authenticity; and I have somewhere read that *select features strike the mind more forcibly than numerous descriptions.* Two more cases I shall, however, add to those already given, and with them conclude the section.

In the removal by death of the lady of the Rev. Mr. Leacock, the minister of St. Leonard's Chapel, the community of Bridgetown, and especially the female portion, sustained an incalculable loss. The dread disease which for many weeks called her to soothe the sufferings and minister to the wants of the sick and dying, and which for days had disappeared, or nearly so, from the district, was commissioned, ere it passed away, in the inscrutable arrangements of Divine Providence, to remove her from the scene of her usefulness. "Long will it be," says the sympathizing recorder of her death, "before the poor will forget her kind words and deeds of sympathy, the upper classes her gentle and unassuming example, or the congregation the sweet notes in which she led the sacred music of the church."

Philosophers tell us that since the creation of the world not one single particle of matter has ever been lost. It may have passed into new shapes, it may have been combined with other elements, may have floated away in smoke or vapour, but it is not lost. It will come back again in the dew-drop or the rain, it will spring up in the fibre of the plant, or paint itself on the rose-leaf. Through all its transformations Providence watches over it and directs it still. Even so it is with every holy thought, or heavenly desire, or humble aspiration, or generous and self-denying effort. It may escape our observation, we may be unable to follow it, but it is an element of the moral world, and it is not lost.

"I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write,

Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; *and their works do follow them.*"

There were few, if any, that exerted themselves more during this season of unprecedented trial than the Rev. W. Bannister, the superintendent of Wesleyan missions in Barbados. He was indefatigable in visiting the sick, and self-sacrificing in endeavours to ameliorate suffering and relieve distress. In several instances he personally assisted in the removal of the dead, lifting them himself into their coffins.

On Sunday, the 2nd of July, he officiated at "Bethel" Chapel, and after the sermon administered the sacrament of the Lord's Supper to the church. The text and discourse of that day are now rehearsed as indicative of his own pious resignation, and prophetic of the eventful week before him: "It is the Lord: let him do what seemeth him good."—1 Sam. iii. 18.

On the Tuesday following his baby died. The colour of the infant's skin after death was like sullied wax, and his little eyes were much sunken. These were suspicious indications; but Mr. Bannister could not believe that it was a case of cholera, and he kissed the child repeatedly as he lay in his coffin. A little girl called Sarah Louisa also kissed her baby brother after his death. The next morning Sarah Louisa was attacked with a malignant type of cholera, and Mr. Bannister was seized, and at once utterly prostrated under the gripe of the *destroyer*. The little girl literally withered away; by two P.M. she had joined her brother in heaven, and we carried out her coffin quietly and buried her remains at his side in the chapel-yard. The anxiety of his afflicted wife, colleagues, and friends, was now concentrated on Mr. Bannister, but the disease marched on, defying every remedy, and after lingering over the collapsed stage, he died of the consecutive fever on Sunday, the 9th of July, at a quarter to eight o'clock, P.M. For many hours before his departure

Mr. Bannister was unconscious, and breathed apparently with difficulty; but the last hour he seemed to be calmly passing away. It was a solemn period as I and one or two others stood around and watched him die. Our congregations in the city were supplicating the throne of grace, and waiting anxiously for the All-wise to declare his will. Softer and slower, sometimes with a considerable interval, the dying herald of the cross drew breath; then the usual time for inspiration passed, and instead there was an awful stillness. We looked: he was gone. No, another breath, and then a gentle sigh rent the veil of flesh, and he passed through the open door to mingle with the unbodied spirits of the church triumphant.

As Mr. Bannister held high office in the mission, his removal is not only deeply deplored by our churches in the West Indies, but also by the parent committee in England, who thus express their high sense of his abilities and worth.

"Never were our feelings deeper in recording the loss of a labourer in the Lord's field than they now are in stating that it has pleased Providence to remove by cholera the Rev. W. Bannister from the head of our missions in the St. Vincent and Demerara district. Never did a more faithful man die at his post. Mr. Bannister's had become one of extreme danger; but true to his holy calling, he toiled on in the midst of pestilence, and fell with glory. For his bereaved family, for his colleagues, and the work he so unremittingly, so wisely, and so unpretendingly served, we mourn; for his happy end, and now assured blessedness, and for the good example he has left to all servants of Christ whose duty calls them into danger, we devoutly bless his Lord who sustained him."

O Death, insatiate archer! terrible destruction thou hast effected with thy cholera dart. What multitudes hast thou cast bound into thy dreary dungeon, the grave! We ask, where is thy sting? and thou pointest us to hands wrung

over beloved corpses, but wrung in vain; to fresh-closed graves watered with floods of tears; to the darling child snatched from its affectionate mother, and the beloved wife from the bleeding heart of the sobbing husband; to the pining grief of bereaved widows, and the last gasp of the dying; to the edifices of happiness destroyed, and the bonds of affection burst. But I hear the shout of triumph over thee,—"Death is swallowed up in victory." ONE there is who has burst from thy grasp, escaped from thy stronghold, and possessed himself of its keys. He has broken thy power, he holds thee in derision, Jesus Christ presses thee into his service. Thou art no longer the ghastly skeleton, thou hast become the angel of God. Where is thy sting, O Death? where now thy victory, boasting grave? Thy dead men shall all live again. Thy gloomy cavern is the dressing-room for heaven—the subterranean road to bliss—the vestibule of glory! Hear thy Conqueror: "I am the resurrection, and the life." "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death." Purged from sin by the virtue and power of Christ's atonement, the world shall also be purified from all its sad and humiliating fruits. Yielding to renovating fires, it shall be new cast, "a world of righteousness and love." Then there shall be no more graves, or coffins, or mourners, or cholera, or decline.

"There shall be no more death." The garden will no longer be disfigured with the sepulchre! "I saw," says the Apostle John, "that death and hell (the grave) were cast into the lake of fire."

"There is no flock, however watched and tended,
But *one* dead lamb is there;
There is no fireside, howsoe'er defended,
But has *one* vacant chair.

"Let us be patient: these severe afflictions
Not from the ground arise,
But oftentimes celestial benedictions
Assume this dark disguise.

"We see but dimly through the mists and vapours
Amid these earthly damps,
What seem to us but dim, funereal tapers,
May be heaven's distant lamps."

V.

DEATH AND PRAYER.

When Queen Victoria, in her yacht, the "Fairy" steamer, went ahead of the "Duke of Wellington" flag-ship, and, on the signal being given, the splendid naval armament destined to war with Russia in the Baltic Sea weighed anchor, and moved sublimely after her, her Majesty leading them, as by a figure, to battle; it was a moment of pride for Britain, and her shores might well resound and echo with the cheers of sanguine multitudes. But when the same royal lady returned again, after bidding that English Armada plough its way to glory, and summoning her subjects through the length and breadth of the land to prayer, prostrated herself before the throne of the "King of kings," and prayed, "O God, defend the right," thus securing the alliance of Omnipotence, it was a brighter omen for the success of our arms—a surer pledge of ultimate victory.

National recognitions of Divine Providence accord with the practice of all ages. We find them on the page of both sacred and profane records. The history of the Jews, the narrative of the Ninevites, alike exhibit this acknowledgment of God. We trace the same principle operating among the heathen, who would seek to avert or remove plague or famine by propitiatory sacrifices to their gods.

Solomon, at the dedication of the temple, as he stood before the altar of the Lord in the presence of all the congregation of Israel, spread forth his hands in prayer, recognizing the fact that all earthly affairs are under Divine governance: "If thy people go out to war against their enemies, by the way that thou shalt send them, and they pray unto thee . . . . . then hear thou from the

heavens their prayer and their supplication, and maintain their cause." Again: "If there be pestilence . . . . . or whatsoever sore, or whatsoever sickness there be: then what prayer or what supplication soever shall be made of any man, or of all thy people Israel, when every man shall know his own sore, and his own grief, and shall spread forth his hands . . . . . then hear thou from heaven thy dwelling-place," &c.

"Philosophy asks a reason for the efficacy of prayer, and, waiting for an answer, never prays at all. Religion hears that God will be inquired of by us, thankfully bends the knee, touches the golden sceptre, and bears away the blessing."

The 14th of June was set apart, by public proclamation, for humiliation and prayer in Barbados, with special reference to the ravages of cholera. "Man's extremity," it has been said, "is God's opportunity." At this time Bridgetown was in extremity. More than 300 persons died in the city during the hours of the Fast-day. The crowded churches and chapels attested the general fear and perplexity, as well as the faith of the community. Everyone felt that the affliction proceeded from a superhuman source, over which no wisdom or skill of earth could exert any control. Sincerity and fervour were thrown into the confession, "We have done those things which we ought not to have done, and we have left undone those things which we ought to have done; and" *therefore* "there is no *health* in us."

I insert a list of the texts preached from in several of the places of worship. The Rev. Mr. Leacock, officiating at the Cathedral, founded his discourse on Acts x. 33: "Now, therefore, are we all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God."

The Rev. Mr. Grant preached at St. Mary's, from Peter v. 6: "Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time."

The Rev. Mr. Redorar, at St. Paul's, took for his text Amos iv. 12: "Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel."

The Rev. Mr. Seidel, at the Moravian Chapel, preached from Chron. xx. 12: "Neither know we what to do, but our eyes are upon thee."

At the James-street Wesleyan Chapel, the text in the morning was out of Amos iii. 6: "Shall a trumpet be blown in the city, and the people not be afraid? Shall there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it?"

And in the evening the text was taken from Jonah iii. 9: "Who can tell if God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not?"

The text on which the discourse was founded at Bethel Chapel was selected from the Book of Job. The Rev. Mr. Rising preached from Job ii. 10: "What? shall we receive good at the hands of God, and shall we not receive evil?"

The lessons deduced from these portions of God's word, were man's fall, misery, helplessness, redemption by Christ, dependence upon God. The prevailing epidemic was proclaimed to be a Divine visitation on account of sin, and the necessity was dwelt upon of confession, humiliation, repentance, and amendment for the time to come. The truth was also exhibited that hurricanes, pestilences, earthquakes, though referable to natural causes, are to be regarded also as subserving God's moral government in the world. The duties devolving upon all professing Christians were, at the same time, earnestly and faithfully enforced. The duty of courage to overcome, by precept and example, the general panic, and the duty of charity to relieve the destitution and distress, of which such affecting examples were being unveiled, and to embrace the opportunity of doing good while one half of Bridgetown was, by this dread calamity, being made known to the other half.

Fervent and united were the supplications which on this day were addressed to heaven. Many that had never felt their need of a Saviour, ejaculated with sincerity (now that

death was so nigh) the petition of the publican, "God be merciful to me a sinner;" and "the thousands of Israel" pleaded the merits of the atonement, imploring that God "would turn away his fierce anger from us."

And was there any answer to these united prayers? Was there any sign that they had been heard in heaven? Yes; the mortality, greatest on this day of humiliation, afterwards gradually abated. Although from the list it appears as if the heaviest mortality had been on the following day, the number of interments being greater, my previous assertion is sustained by the fact that sixty of those who died on the Fast-day, lay over for interment to the day following.

With profound humility we receive this token for the encouragement of our faith; and while grateful that it pleased the Almighty to abate the pestilence, we rejoice also in another proof that He hears and answers prayer. When the same direful form of pestilence raged some years ago in London, there was the same Divine regard to national humiliation and prayer. God's principles are fixed as the pillars of heaven, but his purposes are accessible to human interference.

VI.

FAMINE AND RIOT.

Provisions were scarce and high when the cholera broke out in Barbados. For several months little or no rain had fallen, and the poor suffered much from want. Their systems, impoverished by insufficient aliment and unwholesome water, were the easy recipients of the miasm, and it cannot be doubted that these circumstances added greatly to the mortality.

Although we cannot describe the connexion between the mental and material, it is an ascertained truth that there is such a connexion, and the material body does affect the incorruptible mind. Scarcity of food and water produces disease throughout the whole man, languor of body, dis-

content of mind. Before the epidemic reached our shores, the red glow of cane-patches on fire would occasionally give an unnatural illumination to the darkness of the night, and it was said that some of these fires were the work of incendiaries.

The destitution of the poor in the city was partially met by soup kitchens, opened at the public expense, where rations of rice, bread, candles, arrow-root, &c., were also distributed to those who were furnished with certificates from the Commissioners of the Board of Health.

But in the country, the supply of gratuitous provision was scarcely so liberal, and not so general, and in some parts of the island the poor were destitute of the necessaries of life. The cholera was among them, and their little means of support entirely failed. Instead, however, of representing their circumstances to those in a position to afford them relief, the people on a few estates in St. Andrew's and St. Thomas's parishes began to manifest symptoms of turbulence and disorder. On the 20th of June a mob of labourers assembled at "Turner's Hall" estate, in St. Andrew's parish. They seized upon a hogshead of sugar, emptied it, and rolled the cask down a ravine. They then proceeded (increasing to between three and four hundred persons) to "Apes Hill" and the "Spring" estates, where they broke open the boiling-house, carried off the sugar, and committed other depredations. From these estates they went to "Farmer's," and giving a severe beating to the overseer, who endeavoured to protect the property, they took possession of 2000 pounds of yams.

Their cry was, "Food! Food! give us food!" One manager rang the bell as they entered the estate, and called on all the labourers to defend the property of their master. A skirmish then ensued, and the pillagers finding they were likely to be worsted, prudently made their retreat. At a time when death was flapping his dark wing over the city, filling every heart with dread, and every house with desolation, the report of this outbreak was appalling. About five o'clock

in the evening, a mounted policeman dashed at full gallop along James-street, and entered the central station. The intelligence quickly spread, and the horrors of insurrection were talked over, as likely to be added to the existing plague.

A detachment of the police force was soon on its way to the scene of riot; several special constables were sworn in, and the greatest promptitude was displayed by the executive in checking the outrage, and bringing the offenders to justice. A party of gentlemen from the city also armed themselves, and rode through the disaffected estates; and a detachment of the 46th regiment, consisting of 40 men, was marched to Hole-town, and remained under arms in the Wesleyan Chapel during the night. The ringleaders were subsequently secured, tried at the ensuing assizes, and severally sentenced, in proportion to the extent of their participation in the above lawless acts. It is a fact creditable to the labourers generally, that so little sympathy was shown with the rioters, and that such violence and robbery are strange occurrences in the annals of Barbados.

VII.

"BENEFIT OF CLERGY."

To die without "benefit of clergy," was accounted in some ages of the world, some periods of European history, as the forfeiture of salvation. The phrase conveys a more specific meaning now its reality appears, the machinery of superstition on which it formerly depended is shattered,—the truth being of itself all-prevalent, and every department of life, from enlightened conviction, acknowledges the "benefit of clergy." A "living ministry" preach the word, administer the sacraments, conduct the ordinances, keep alive the remembrance of God,—

"Point to brighter worlds, and lead the way."

One who thought deeply, and lived purely, and who was endued with much "wisdom from above," says:—

"The pulpit (in the sober use
Of its legitimate and peculiar powers)
Must stand acknowledged, while the world shall stand,
The most important and effectual guard,
Support, and ornament of virtue's cause."

And then Cowper sketches the occupant of the pulpit: gives us his ideal of a preacher, as in imagination he beholds him engaged in his solemn duties :—

"There stands the messenger of truth, there stands
The legate of the skies ! His theme divine,
His office sacred, his credentials clear;
By him the violated law speaks out
Its thunders, and by him in strains as sweet
As angels use, the Gospel whispers peace."

Such a man must exert an influence on the educational life of his sphere and age. Absorbing all the light which revelation, genius, discovery, and science pour upon him, he is to be the earnest exponent of truth to the world—a witness for God, a lighthouse on "time's bank of quicksands," "holding forth the word of life."

During the ravages of cholera in Barbados, the services of religion were regularly held, and the ministers of the various churches and chapels in town and country, were "instant in season, and out of season," to "preach the word," to arouse the careless, to comfort mourners, and direct those panic-stricken by the awful sweep of the pestilence, to the "rock higher than themselves."

But it was not from the pulpit alone that they exhibited Christ, and cried, "Behold the Lamb of God."

The clergy were constantly passing in and out also among the sick, going from house to house, advising the healthy how to avoid exposure to the disease, and prescribing faith in Christ as the great antidote for *anxiety*, which is one of the predisposing causes of cholera; they administered restoratives to the afflicted, and the consolations of religion to the dying, telling them of the "Good Physician" who was nigh; and waiting the exercise of their faith, to apply the "balm of Gilead" for the healing of their deathless souls.

It cannot be denied that at this time a great moral change (would God it were a lasting one) was apparent in the community. A stranger would have been surprised to hear the long lists of banns of marriage which were published every Sabbath ; for numbers of those who had been living in concubinage, were constrained by the fear of death and judgment to put away sin, and solemnize their nuptials. There was a great increase in the number of baptisms also, and these obligations, delayed and neglected while there were no anxious forebodings of the future,—were now fulfilled ; the churches were more crowded, and the services performed with a deeper feeling of religion during the cholera than before.

" Charity to the soul, is the soul of charity." One soul is of more importance than a thousand worlds. Reader, have you ever stood by the dying bed of a fellow-creature ? Is it not awful to place oneself as it were in the avenue along which a soul is passing from time to eternity ?—to watch its transition,—hovering at the entrance,—struggling its way through the valley of the shadow of death, till at last breaking loose from the confines of all that is visible, " it mounts the heavenly hills, or plunges down to hell."

The nature of the cholera renders exceedingly perilous the spiritual state of those who have, up to the period of their seizure, lived " without God." The attacks are frequently so violent, as to preclude lengthy religious instruction, and to permit only of the brief appeal and prayer. I have, when attending cholera cases, been almost covered with the vomit of a dying person, brought up with the sudden spasmodic jerk (allowing of no escape,) which is characteristic of the disease.

Macaulay, the accomplished English historian, recording the heroism of the Jesuits, says, " When a new and terrible pestilence passed round the globe ; when fear had dissolved all the ties that hold society together ; when the secular clergy had deserted their flocks ; when medical succour was not to be purchased by gold ; when the strongest natural

affections had yielded to the love of life,—even then, the Jesuit was found by the pallet, which bishop and curate, physician and nurse, father and mother, had deserted, bending over infected lips, to catch the faint accents of confession; and holding up to the last, before the expiring penitent, the image of the expiring Redeemer."

It is a matter of devout thanksgiving, that the merited reproach of those transition times is wiped from Christendom. In the conduct of the clergy, during the visitation of cholera in Barbados, in their assiduous visitations among the afflicted, their zeal and prayers, their faithfulness in pointing the dying to the Saviour; not presenting to the eye of sense a carved image, but exhibiting to the eye of faith, through the glass of God's word, "the friend of sinners;" we trace the same heroism commended in the Jesuit, but heroism of heavenly inspiration, not "handling the word of God deceitfully," or obscuring it by tradition, or burying it under gaudy mummeries,—but appealing by it to the mind, and educing and leading to Christ, by its wondrous power, all the deep and rich affections of the soul. If the diaries of ministers of religion were given to the world through the press, they would form, if not the most cheerful, the most profitable chapter in the cholera experiences of Barbados.

Many a wanderer has been brought back to the Shepherd and Bishop of souls; many a licentious sinner awe-struck under conviction of the "sinfulness of sin," and the "wrath to come," has gained the foot of the cross, exclaiming, "If I perish, I perish;" and many a dying eye has kindled with the glow of quenchless faith, while stimulated, encouraged to believe, and pointed to the Lamb of God. How many, eternity will reveal!

VIII.

THE PRESS

Wields its golden sceptre over the realms of civilization. It has been said that the character of the pulpit and press

of a country truthfully mirrors its moral and mental condition. How these two instruments of power sway men! How do they, when equal to the dignity and commanding sweep of their position, "turn the world upside down!" What pen can worthily represent the authority and influence delegated to those wonderful types and founts of thought in the printer's office! What a marvel is the *newspaper!* —dropping as it were the same thought into hundreds of minds at the same minute. Coming from all parts of the world, its voices are ever amusing and instructing us. What hidden influences! what strange machinery! what ever-active, never-tiring elements! what indefatigable brains must be at work, to achieve a result so regular and continuous as the newspaper! The facts and rumours, the occurrences, tariffs, and politics, the births, marriages, and deaths, that fill its columns—how they fly over the land, speaking cogently, though silently; transmitted to the ceiled mansion and the boarded cottage, the kitchen and the drawing-room; travelling swiftly to the village and obtaining equal circulation in the "city full;" its contents studied by crowned heads, and made the subject of grave debate between waggoners over a mug of ale at the road-side tavern. Our acquaintance with the progress and ravages of cholera would have been very vague and imperfect, had it not been for the exertions and influence of the island press of Barbados. Although having to contend with pestilence in the illness, and, in some cases, the death of their "hands," the public were furnished, with a regularity almost uninterrupted, through the columns of the "West Indian," the "Barbadian," the "Liberal," and the "Globe," with details of the spread of the epidemic, statistics of the mortality, accounts of the proceedings of the Board of Health, the arrangements made to relieve destitution, the localities of the soup kitchens, the names of the Commissioners of Health, and other items of valuable information. The "West Indian" contained in addition a frequent summary of the ravages of cholera in the island, prepared with a special

view to packet transmission, by means of which the anxiety of those relatively and commercially interested in England, or elsewhere, was from time to time relieved. In the preparation of these "recollections," I have to acknowledge my obligations to the last-named newspaper, as I have frequently refreshed my memory with the copious details and ample information contained in its columns. The alarming illness of the respected editor of the "Globe," and the lamented death of Abel Clinckett, Esq., the late venerable editor of the "Barbadian," have taught the lesson, that the highest and most useful walks of life are not secure against the attacks of this mysterious malady. It was pleasing to observe the tribute of respect paid by the island press to the memory of their late contemporary, of whom the "West Indian" writes, "that he was the consistent advocate of religion and morality, and the interests of the Church of England."

The valuable assistance rendered by the several public journals justly claims a chapter in these "recollections of cholera," as they allayed apprehension, published intelligence, and advertised specifics, at a time when, as a community, we were at our wits' end, and no remedy proved to be a panacea. The position of a public journalist entitles to respect all such advertisements; and while this terrible scourge is afflicting the world, it behoves the public press to notice all the means which talent can devise for its mitigation and removal. May Barbados ever enjoy the blessing of public opinion embodied in a free and enlightened press!

IX.

CHOLERA IN THE COUNTRY.

When the epidemic abated in the city, it moved like a cloud up into the interior of the island. It has been said that the cholera travels along the banks of rivers, or hugs the seacoast; but it was equally bad in the central districts of Barbados. It has been asserted, too, that it fastens upon unhealthy places, and delights in marshy and undrained

lands, where there are accumulations of filth, and people live huddled together in close lanes and streets; but in this island it broke out and proved as destructive, comparatively, in the labourers' houses on the most hilly parts of the country, as anywhere else. It was observed indeed to be the most virulent in some of the most salubrious localities. It was very bad at "Pilgrim" estate in "Christ Church" parish, on the south-east coast, the highest elevation in that part of the island.* At "Canefield," and "Brey's Spring," in St. Thomas's, the mortality was also great, although these places were situated 1000 feet above the level of the sea.

"Avoiding," says an eminent physician, "the question of contagion, it cannot be denied that a mysterious influence operated during the epidemic period,—that it chose its own victims,—exercised its deleterious qualities more in some localities than others, although none, not even the most elevated, isolated, and healthy sites were exempt,—often capriciously and on a sudden changed the scene of its ravages, and evinced its effects, independently of the moral emotion of apprehension or absolute fear, on almost all persons, by more or less embarrassing the tone and functions of their digestive organs." At "Bathsheba," on the north-east coast, considered the healthiest part of the healthy parish of St. Joseph's, the disease was very fatal. A police report that came into the city, showed up to the day previous 53 deaths out of 54 attacked. In Christ Church, the interments were so numerous, that the cholera burial-ground was nearly filled up—the deaths for that parish alone exceeding 2000 persons. The infection is supposed to have been carried into several estates in St. Lucy's and St. Andrew's, by the released prisoners whose homes were in those districts. At "Morgan Lewis," where one of the prisoners lived, on his arrival at his home, all his family took the disease and died; and "Shorey's" village in St. Andrew's, a locality

* "Even the highest mountains are not refuges from cholera; a German missionary has died of the disease in the 'Neilgherries,' eight thousand feet above the sea-level."—*Illustrated London News.*

thickly inhabited, on receiving the infection through, as it is presumed, a similar channel, was so awfully ravaged as to be almost left desolate. In some parts of St. Lucy's parish it broke out with great malignity; so numerous were the dead bodies on one or two estates, that most were buried where they died; and some were burned with their houses in one funeral pile. Right up the slopes, and along the summits of the mountains in St. Andrew's, the disease raged, striking like the lightning, sometimes on the top of the hills, sometimes below them, as if the cloud of malaria had been carried by the wind. With the eccentricity peculiar to cholera, one estate would be decimated, while its neighbour would be untouched, then it would fly off, and return again. On some estates it would rage, and seem to spend its energies in a very short time; from others it would select one or two victims occasionally, and the mortality, at no period very great, would extend over many weeks. From "Vaucluse" cholera travelled inwards, along the hills of St. Thomas's, and touching the police station at "Moncrief," it descended into the fertile plains of St. Philip's parish. It swept also over St. George's, and many people died in that parish. Speightstown, situated to leeward, on swampy ground near the sea, was screened for some time, and the authorities availed themselves of the respite, and made prompt and judicious arrangements for visiting the sick, and giving early assistance. In reference to the conduct of the people, one writing from the country says, "In numerous cases where the medicine has been blessed in removing the disease, the unhappy patient sinks from the lack of the tender sympathies and attentions of his relations and friends who are immediately at hand." A striking instance of apathy and inhuman conduct was related to me by a gentleman residing in the neighbourhood where it occurred. The sister-in-law and brother of a man on one of the estates were attacked almost simultaneously, upon which he became alarmed, and left them to their fate. Before quitting the house, he placed by each a large jar of

water and some biscuits, then locked the door, and went away all night. The next morning he returned, opened the window and looked in, expecting to see his relatives dead. Finding, however, that they were still alive, that some of the biscuits were eaten, and all the water (several gallons) drank, he renewed the supply, and again left them alone. Both ultimately recovered, although destitute of any kind of nursing or care.

At Payne's Bay, in St. James's parish, the disease was very fatal; there was a great mortality also in the village of "Hastings," just beyond, but adjoining the garrison at St. Ann's. It is estimated that 80 persons died in St. Philip's parish, from September 23rd to October 10th, and that 400 died throughout the island in the month of September, a time when congratulations were being exchanged at its subsidence.

The deaths throughout the island, up to the middle of October, are estimated at above 20,000, or about one-sixth of the entire population.

X.

TREATMENT.

"There is an obligation resting on man as a moral and accountable being, to study, respect, and obey the ascertained laws by which the universe is governed; for these are not less the laws of God than those which he has been pleased to communicate in his written word for man's immediate direction and government." In glancing at the "treatment" adopted, and bringing up from the depths of memory some "recollections" of its results, I would deferentially submit that Asiatic cholera may be arrested either in its early stage or in its least energetic assaults, but once in full development human skill and effort are powerless. Sometimes the disease gives premonitions of its approach, and then is the time when an attempt to arrest its progress

is to be made with the greatest hope of success. In such attacks diarrhœa gives warning of that which may follow.

The peculiar cause of cholera is unknown; whether it is animalcular, gaseous, or electrical is a mystery. As it seems capable of diffusing itself, and travelling independently of transportation by human beings, or by the wind, as if possessed of a self-moving power, some have supposed it electrical; but, like many other truths, our philosophy cannot as yet adequately demonstrate it. The public papers report that some Indians and Malays have recently arrived from the Philippine Islands at Cadiz, where the cholera is prevailing, and have performed extraordinary cures. These men keep secret both their principle of cure and their medicine, but declare that the malady is caused by small worms, created by the state of the atmosphere, attaching themselves to the heart.

There are, however, predisposing and occasional causes, exciting media which are shown by experience to favour the outbreak and propagation of the disease. It is generally the least fatal in winter, and in cold climates, showing that a tropical atmosphere is predisposing to cholera; sudden chilliness by cold draughts of air, or bathing, is also prejudicial. The most numerous attacks and the greatest mortality taking place during the night, distinguish it as a perilous season during the presence of the epidemic. Strong mental emotions of any kind, violent exercise inducing fatigue, intemperance, want of sufficient food, indigestible diet, insufficiently-ventilated rooms, and the neglect of personal cleanliness, are all considered by authorities as conductors to cholera. The sewer, the cesspool, and the gully, are great centres of infection. The cholera loves to loiter in blind alleys; it calls in where human beings are packed together in fetid rooms; it is inhaled in the polluted air of the undrained quarter of a town, where filth and decayed matter lie festering on the surface of the ground, or it floats lazily in the miasmata which brood over the rank and overcrowded graveyard.

There is a considerable variety in the essential manifestations of Asiatic cholera. Some, when attacked, are at once prostrated by collapse, and appear death-stricken from the time of their seizure; in the case of others, the disease is more gradual. With some the attack commences with diarrhœa, vomiting, and, as the disease gathers strength, the symptoms change to rice-water evacuations, cramps, spasms, &c. The afflicted person complains of a burning pain in the stomach, and a general feeling of depression and wretchedness. It is said that in the worst forms of this disease there is no vomiting or diarrhœa. In the cases most alarming, and requiring the most prompt attention, there is a sudden prostration of the vital powers. The eyes are upturned and fixed, the surface of the whole body is covered with a cold sticky sweat, the voice becomes sepulchral, and the wrist pulseless.

The most approved and, for a considerable time after the outbreak of cholera, the most effectual specific was camphor dissolved in spirits of wine. The dose, as administered by some practitioners, was one or two drops every ten or fifteen minutes; but some gave, and with astonishing results, one table-spoonful of the strongest mixture on the first manifestation of the disease. The value of camphor as a restorative has been long known to medical men. In the cholera practice at Paris, it is mentioned that so much confidence was placed in camphor that people would carry it about with them, frequently nibbling it as a prophylactic; but the abuse proved as destructive as the prudent use of it was curative; many of these camphor-eaters becoming insane, some even dying in a state of madness. Catechu, a preparation of chalk, laudanum, and, when collapse threatened, brandy, ammonia, &c., were among the chief remedies resorted to by the allopathist physicians.

The homœopathist evidently placed great reliance on "veratrum" and "cuprum," with ice alone for sustenance. One of the latest specifics, during the reign of cholera in Barbados, was calomel, which was in some instances very

efficacious. The castor-oil treatment has been recently tried in England, but the deaths appear to have been 70 or 80 per cent. on those attacked.

The principal vegetable remedies that have been recommended, and used with more or less efficacy, are the "eupatorium perfoliatum," known as the Christmas bush, and the "quaco," or Angostura bark. A decoction of the skin of the "pomegranate" has been found useful in checking the diarrhœa. Prophylactic medicines are taken by many on the first appearance of epidemic cholera; and it is generally acknowledged to be the duty of every one, when the disease is prevalent in an infectious form, to be careful about diet, having regular hours for meals, and, as far as possible, obtaining substantial food, or, in other words, living generously. Arrow-root is pronounced very wholesome sustenance during the prevalence of either epidemic or sporadic cholera. Soup, fish, fruit, vegetables, should be excluded from the bill of fare. "The unusual mortality in Paris," says Joslin, "where at the least twenty thousand of the inhabitants were carried off in a month, occurred during the season of Lent." *The inhabitants were subsisting on vegetables.* "Immediately after Easter the virulence of the disease rapidly abated."

The immediate aim of all the remedies administered to those attacked with cholera, appears to be to avert or check collapse, and re-induce perspiration. On the mode of effecting this there exists considerable controversy. Some put hot bricks to the feet and hands, mustard plaisters across the stomach, and flannels to envelope the whole body, with constant hand-friction. Others assert that all these hot applications are of no more effect than if they were applied to a dead body! Spirits of turpentine and mustard quickly remove cramps when rubbed smartly on the part affected. I knew a gentleman who, on being seized with cholera, had a blanket soaked with turpentine, and wrapping himself in the stimulating envelope, soon broke out into a perspiration and recovered. The homœopathist appears to over-

look comparatively external symptoms, and to direct his efforts to the seat of the disease, confident that if he can stay the work of death within, the "outward man" will soon recover its tone, circulation, and vigour. The mention of homœopathy leads me to notice that two systems of treatment, totally antagonistic but equally professing to be under the governance of science, obtained in the cholera practice of Barbados. In concluding this chapter, I propose to offer a few remarks on these respective systems; not entering into a professional analysis of their merits, but viewing them in the abstract.

THE OLD SCHOOL AND THE NEW SCHOOL.

The present era is an age of discovery: a period of extraordinary mental restlessness and activity. Everything old and new is subjected to the severest tests and the strictest scrutiny, and no sham, whether veiled under the most saintly or scientific garb, or covered with the prestige of antiquity and fame, is secure against an explosion. If we receive the evidence of Dr. Arnold, such a state of things is healthy, and promotive of the public good. That great man says:—

"There is nothing so revolutionary and so convulsive to society as the strain to keep things fixed when all the world is, by the very law of its creation, in eternal progress; and the cause of all the evils in the world may be traced to that natural but most deadly form of human indolence and corruption, that our business is to *preserve*, and not to *improve*."

Medical practice in its turn has been arraigned before the genius of inquiry and reformation, and the result has been a division on the theory and practice of medicine. As I approach this subject I see a frown gathering on the reader's face at my presumption, but my pen still dashes on, spurred by the conscience of a good intention, and the impulse

of a distinctive aim. It would be unpardonable vanity in me to attempt an arbitration of the respective claims of these rival schools of medicine to the confidence of the public; but, inasmuch as I refer solely to cholera experiences in Barbados, I must request that this portion of my "Recollections" may remain unmolested.

"The mighty masters of the healing art" rally around two standards. The distinctive titles of their respective systems are ALLOPATHY and HOMŒOPATHY. The former is of great antiquity, the latter of yesterday: the one coeval almost with the world, the other a *parvenu*. Hahnemann is the discoverer and promulgator of homœopathy. The system depends upon its merits. It has no claim to public notice but its successes. It has come forth upon the world in speech weighty, in pretensions great, but in bodily presence somewhat contemptible, as David when he went to meet the giant with a sling and a stone. With few hospitals in which its disciples might practise, its literature scantily circulated, but few medical names of note arraying themselves on its side, the question arises, if there had been no truth in the system would not the bubble have burst long ago? Allopathy, on the other hand, has inscribed its name on universal history. It has its patriarchs, apostles, philosophers, professors. Count up its brilliant line from Aristotle and Galen till you reach Sir Astley Cooper, Sir Benjamin Brodie, and Sir James Clark. See its numerous hospitals, its colleges of surgeons, the druggists' shops in almost every street, the apothecaries' halls piled from floor to ceiling with drug and unguent, and you must be convinced of the wide sway of this system, you must submit that allopathy holds the sceptre of therapeutics.

Yet homœopathy has claims on our patient study, and calm, dispassionate investigation; for, whether its healing virtue lie in dietary restrictions, in the imagination of the patient, or in inherent curative energy, it is a fact that in the hands of an eminent physician and honourable member of the council, residing at Speightstown (who, for the

sake of homœopathy, counts his former experience of college study, and hospital and general practice, but loss, allying himself fearlessly to the new system, *Athanasius contra mundum*), its success has been indisputable. Its reputation has risen considerably in Barbados by its achievements during the recent sweep of pestilence that has happily subsided, and its results in the yellow fever epidemic of 1852.

I subjoin here some statistics of cholera treatment, and its comparative efficacy in Speightstown. They are taken from the police returns, and are in favour of homœopathic treatment of cholera, as showing a less per-centage of deaths.

Total number of cases, from 30th of May to the 31st of July, 1,066.
Total deaths, 313, or 29·362 per cent.
Of the deaths, 78 appear to have received no medical aid.
Allopathic treatment: 107 cases, of whom 27 died, or 25·233 per cent.
Homœopathic treatment: 881 cases, of whom 208 died, or 23·609 per cent.; over one and a half per cent. in favour of the latter treatment.

The cases treated homœopathically in Bridgetown by the *employés* of the Homœopathic Association were about 1800 in number. One of the most scientific of the practitioners informs me that the deaths in proportion to those attacked that he attended were about 17 per cent.

But cholera is a mysterious ailment. Has either school achieved a triumph? A general review of treatment and results would probably show that while one remedy has succeeded for a time, it has afterwards as signally failed; and that where two have been treated alike, and worked upon from the same stage of the disease, one has recovered, the other died. Does not the mortality throughout the island show at least 50 per cent. of deaths on the number attacked? and does not such a per-centage compel the conclusion that the disease was too subtle, too potent to be grappled with successfully? Hence the variety of specifics. Hence the

experimental character of the remedial prescriptions. Still the homœopathist, even in this view of cholera treatment, seems to possess an advantage, if not in the efficacy of his medicine, at least in the confidence with which he administers it. He announces his law of cure, *similia similibus curantur*, answering for every disease, familiar or foreign, administers his globule, and with unwearied patience essays the virtue of infinitesimal doses, recovering often his grateful patient from the embrace of death.

We are growing bold enough to venture to predict the possibility of allopathy becoming more homœopathic, and homœopathy following its more venerable rival, though it be with unequal step, in their benign mission of alleviating physical pain, and prolonging human life. Would not their "agreement to differ" defend society from a host of irregular practitioners; and as health is an unspeakable blessing, and life a boon for which a man "will give all that he hath," and as "light" or knowledge "is" both "sweet" and safe, why may not both theories run their course? Why should not two suns shine together in the hemisphere of medicine?

XI.

CONCLUSION.

The cholera subsided as an epidemic in Barbados in the latter part of the month of August. Many opinions have been expressed in reference to its introduction into the island. It had re-appeared in Jamaica some weeks previously to its outbreak here, and some maintain that the disease was brought from that island by the "Derwent," one of the R.M.C. steamers. Some seamen on board of her died of cholera on the passage, and the clothes of two of them belonging to this place were, it is said, brought here and given to be washed by the person in whose house it first broke out in Jemmott's-lane. Others charge the epidemic upon the stale flying-fish, which were at the time

brought in abundance to Bridgetown and sold at a cheap rate to the poor, who eagerly purchased them. These fish were brought into the careenage by the boats the evening before, and not getting a sale when fresh, they were disposed of the next morning ten or twelve for a penny, when they were in a half-putrid state. Its introduction has been also assigned to atmospheric changes; some affirming that the neglect of proper cleanliness, in a peculiar condition of the atmosphere, generates the disease. The air was dry, the temperature cool, and fresh high winds were blowing when the cholera first broke out in Barbados; yet the sickness spread and increased in virulence, as if it was energized by the cool winds and the dry weather. About three weeks after its appearance, there was a violent thunder-storm, but it had no perceptible effect upon the raging malady.

"The disease," says an eminent writer, "is propagated partly, though not exclusively, by infection. As to quarantine regulations, we can rarely expect from them more than some postponement of the invasion. *Even this will justify their rigorous enforcement.*"

But though mystery shrouds the origin of the disease, the causes which favour its propagation are known, and for them we are to a certain extent responsible as individuals. There is not a single cubic inch of pestilential gas generated in filthy localities, but what transmits its taint, propagates its contagion, and thereby works its retribution through every grade of society, from the hovels of the poor up to the mansions of the proudest of the proud—the highest of the high. The cholera is every man's business. It is a pestilence that knows no distinction of persons; it involves the peer and the peasant in a common grave.

May we not expect that many sanitary improvements will evolve to Barbados from the disastrous visitation of cholera? Improved dwellings for the poor, wider streets laid out as opportunity offers for their alteration, at right angles with each other; so widened that the rain can wash them, the sun shine all over them, and the winds of heaven ventilate

them, are desiderata for this densely populated city. The engagement of a surveyor, with a view to a water supply for Bridgetown, and the proposition to incorporate the city, electing a town council from its residents to carry out improvements, are tokens as cheering as the ringing of joy-bells, and open out the future of Barbados in a brighter perspective. Accommodating the language of one of the leading journals of the day, we would say that familiarity ought not to breed indifference. Cholera has got a footing in Barbados, but it should not quietly be permitted to naturalize itself in this hitherto healthy island. Sporadic disease no community can wage combined war against; for it is the operation of familiar laws, divine and natural. One man will injure his brain by over-toil and anxiety, another reduce his liver by intemperance, and a third inherit a scrofulous tendency, and wither away under the fell attacks of consumption; but we may carry on the war against small-pox, yellow fever, or Asiatic cholera. The same Great Being who has permitted that such baleful diseases should decimate mankind from time to time, has put the means of security within their reach. The unfortunate Hindoo in some remote region of India, the filthy denizen of the Moscow bazaar, may resign himself to his fate without a struggle; but shall the same thing be said of a country blest with such advantages of nature, art, science, and wealth as is the island of Barbados?

The "great fire" in London happening twelve months after the disappearance of the "great plague," forced the rebuilding of that metropolis on a more open scale, and with greater reference to the health of its inhabitants.

It cannot be said that the island, in a commercial sense, has sustained much injury. Mercy was mingled with judgment in the selection of the time of cholera visitation. What would have become of the crop had the disease broken out in January instead of May? During its ravages the last year's crop was on its way to England, and nature, assisted by the fine season, was urging on the newly-

springing canes; and so dense is the population of the island, that although the mortality has been so great, and some of the estates have lost some of their most trusty "hands," there are labourers sufficient left to reap the coming crop when it reaches maturity.

Solemn and wide-ranging are the moral results of the eventful period which this sketch brings in rapid review before our minds. How the lights and shadows play alternately over us in our probationary state! Soon it will be all light, *or all shadow*. "Man dieth, and wasteth away: yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he?" "Man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets: or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern. Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it." "The Lord shall judge the people," &c. "The Lord is known by the judgment which he executeth," &c. "God is angry with the wicked every day. If he turn not, he will whet his sword; he hath bent his bow, and made it ready. He hath also prepared for him the instruments of death," &c. The judgments of God should teach us to fear his wrath above all things, and his goodness and mercy allure us to love him with our whole heart. Let us show that we have profited by the terrible lessons we have learnt, and by precept and example each strive to fulfil our duty in the sphere in which Providence has placed us.

What strange contrasts fill up life! How the wave sparkles over the wreck, and the green grass hides the sepulchre! I hear the church bells again ringing out their joyful peals over the city. The pestilence has passed away. Men breathe again freely, the marts of business have resumed their activity, the country's pulse, which had almost stopped, beats once more healthfully; and we are summoned by proclamation to observe THIS DAY, the 2nd of November, as a day of "GENERAL THANKSGIVING to the Divine Majesty, to acknowledge his great goodness and mercy in relieving

us from that grievous disease with which this island has been lately visited."

"O come let us sing unto the Lord: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation. Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms."

"Praise waiteth for thee, O God, in Sion: and unto thee shall the vow be performed." "For thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling. I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living." "Thou hast, in love to my soul, delivered it from the pit of corruption; for thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back. For the grave cannot praise thee, death cannot celebrate thee: they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth. THE LIVING, THE LIVING, HE SHALL PRAISE THEE, AS I DO THIS DAY: THE FATHER TO THE CHILDREN SHALL MAKE KNOWN THY TRUTH."

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